



E&R Report No. 10.05

March 2010

A DIGEST OF UNC SYSTEM REPORTS ON FRESHMAN PERFORMANCE: 2006-07

David Holdzkom

The University of North Carolina System (UNC) annually reports statistics related to characteristics of freshmen classes from each high school and district in the state. Because the report includes summary statistics at the district and state levels, it can be used to gauge the relative successes of students who graduated from Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) high schools with that of students from all other North Carolina public high schools. WCPSS graduates were more successful at gaining admission and making academic progress at the member institutions of the UNC system than was true for graduates of other North Carolina high schools in 2006-07. This summary will provide an overview of selected statistics from the most recently available UNC report.

SUMMARY

On virtually every measure, WCPSS graduates were more successful at gaining admission and making academic progress at the member institutions of the UNC system than was true for graduates of other North Carolina high schools. This continues a trend that has been seen since at least 1990, as reported in an earlier E&R analyses. Table 1 shows the number of graduates from each of WCPSS high schools in 2006-07, and the number and percent that enrolled in a UNC system institution the following fall.

Table 1
Number of WCPSS Graduates Enrolling in UNC System, 2007

	Number of Graduates	Number Enrolled in UNC System	Percent Enrolled in UNC System
Apex	507	272	53.65%
Athens Dr	387	209	54.01%
Broughton	466	255	54.72%
Cary	541	220	40.67%
E. Wake	No Data	No Data	No Data
Enloe	477	252	52.83%
Fuquay Varina	326	83	25.46%
Garner	358	97	27.09%
Green Hope	518	290	55.98%
Leesville Rd	494	253	51.21%
Middle Creek	486	203	41.77%
Millbrook	420	172	40.95%
Phillips	57	1	1.75%
Sanderson	389	191	49.10%
SE Raleigh	430	226	52.56%
Wake Forest R	417	177	42.45%
Wakefield	443	204	46.05%
WCPSS	6,716	3,105	46.23%
NC Public Schools	77,354	22,803	29.48%

As Table 1 shows, just over 46% of WCPSS graduates enrolled in a UNC system institution, as compared with just under 30% for all public high schools in North Carolina. Seven high schools (43.75%) had more than 50% of graduates enroll in UNC system universities, while an additional six (37.5%) schools had between 40% and 49% of graduates enroll in UNC system schools. It should be remembered that this report does not include students enrolling in community colleges, independent universities, or universities outside North Carolina.

Table 2 shows the number and percent of students applying to at least one UNC institution; the number and percent of those applying who were accepted; and the number and percent of students who actually enrolled. Note that some students applied to more than one institution. For this set of comparisons only, we also show the effect of pulling WCPSS students out of the North Carolina totals. Generally, when WCPSS is compared with the state, WCPSS tends to somewhat inflate the state statistics. Here, we see the effect of that inflation. The difference

between the state with WCPSS and the state without WCPSS is generally a full percentage point or more lower.

Table 2
Applications To and Acceptances by UNC System Institutions

	WCPSS	All NC Public High Schools	NC Minus WCPSS
Number of graduates (2006-07)	6,716	77,354	70,638
Grads applied to at least 1 UNC Institution	4,704	35,646	30,942
Percent	70.0%	46.1%	43.8%
Number accepted by at least 1 UNC Institution	3,969	29,681	24,780
Percent	59.1%	38.4%	35.1%
Number enrolling at UNC Institutions	3,180	22,803	19,623
Percent	47.3%	29.5%	27.8%

It is clear that a much larger percentage of WCPSS graduates apply to and are accepted by UNC institutions than is true for the state as a whole. Moreover, a larger percentage of WCPSS graduates actually enroll in a UNC system institution than is true for the state as a whole.

Table 3 provides information about class rank (expressed as a percentile) and SAT scores for students who were accepted in the freshmen class of 2005-06 at the UNC system institutions. WCPSS students had, on average, a lower class rank percentile than was true for the state average. This suggests that a larger proportion of WCPSS students were accepted at UNC institutions than was true for the state as a whole. Table 3 also indicates that WCPSS students earned higher average scores on both the verbal and mathematics portions of the SAT.

Table 3
Average Class Rank and Average SAT Scores

	WCPSS	All NC Public High Schools
Average Class Rank of 1st Time Freshmen	66	72
Average SAT Verbal	555	523
Average Mathematics	578	542

Table 4 provides information about the academic success of students during their freshman year. Graduates of WCPSS of the Class of 2006 outperformed graduates of all North Carolina public high schools on every measure in these comparisons. While it is true that the percentage of students in college algebra is lower among WCPSS graduates, this is likely explained by the corresponding higher percentage of WCPSS graduates enrolled in calculus or above. Moreover, a larger percentage of WCPSS graduates had at least a 3.0 GPA than was true for graduates of all NC public high schools, by more than 11 percentage points. A smaller percentage of WCPSS students were enrolled in remedial English and remedial mathematics as well. Finally, a larger

percentage of WCPSS students were enrolled in advanced placement English courses, and in calculus or a higher mathematics course.

Table 4
Selected Indicators of Academic Performance and Preparedness

	WCPSS	All NC Public High Schools
% w/GPA >= 2.0	84.1%	76.9%
% w/GPA >= 3.0	51.2%	40.4%
% Returned for Year 2	87.2%	81.9%
Level of English Placement		
% w/ Advanced Placement in English	14.1%	11.0%
% In Reg. Freshman English	80.8%	80.3%
% In Remedial English	1.5%	2.9%
Level of Math Placement		
% In Calculus or Above	25.6%	18.5%
% In College Algebra	34.0%	38.7%
% In Remedial Mathematics	13.4%	14.8%
% In Honors Program	10.0 %	10.2%
% Taking at least 1 remedial course	3.0%	4.9%

Taken together, then, these figures suggest that WCPSS graduates are well prepared for college at the conclusion of their high school career. While it is certainly true that the mission of the WCPSS is larger than college preparation, this is very important for many families. It is unfortunate that the community college system does not publish a similar report, since that would allow us to look at the condition of WCPSS graduates in another environment. Nevertheless, it is clear that the district's high schools are preparing many students for continued success in the UNC system.